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EXTENDED STAY: FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SUCCESS OR FAILURE WHEN AFRICAN PRESIDENTS ATTEMPT TO AMEND CONSTITUTIONS TO HOLD ON TO POWER

by

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June 2017

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This thesis addresses why some African leaders have succeeded in extending their mandates while others have not. Specifically, the study focuses on societal factors that impose constraints upon leaders attempting to extend or abolish term limits, paying particular attention to the influence of urbanization, formal education, and the functioning of civil society organizations. Using a within-case methodology, the study investigates Blaise Compaore's twenty-seven-year rule in Burkina Faso, comparing his successful extension of his mandate in 2005 to his failed attempt in 2014. Comparative case analysis is used to determine what societal changes may have occurred between the two attempts. The analysis suggests that urbanization and the functioning of civil society organizations were factors important to the difference in outcomes. The factor of formalized education was not found to be important. In 2014, new grassroots, pro-democratic civil society organizations capitalized on urban demographic changes to mobilize pro-democracy opposition to Compaore. The organizations used a number of effective strategies to accomplish this, including civic education and pro-democracy consensus building. These insights offer potential guidance to democracy promoters as they search for opportunities to assist pro-democracy civil society organizations.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
CAR	Collective Anti-Referendum
CDG	Centre pour la Gouvernance Democratique
CDP	Congress for Democracy and Progress Party
CSO	civil society organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FDI	foreign direct investment
FESPACO	International Cine Droit Libre Film Festival
FRC	Front de Resistance Citoyenne
GDP	gross domestic product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MBDHP	Mouvement Burkinabe des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Coordination and Development
PS21	Project for the Study of the 21st Century
RSP	The Regiment de Securite Presidentielle
SIDA	Swedish International Development Corporation
UAS	Unite d'Action Syndicale
USG	United States Government

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I.   OVERVIEW

A.   MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

Since the rise of electoral political regimes in sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1990s, many chief executives have sought to amend their countries' constitutions to extend their time in office. To date, the majority of these attempts have been successful. This thesis aims to contribute to the emerging literature on this phenomenon by analyzing societal factors that affect a leader's success or failure in extending or abolishing term limits.

The impact of three societal factors—urbanization, education and the functioning of civil society organizations—is investigated and assessed within the context of a single country, Burkina Faso, whose president, Blaise Compaore, twice attempted to extend his term. Urbanization and the functioning of civil society organizations were found to be most important for understanding why Compaore was successful in his first attempt but failed in his most recent attempt in 2014, and was ultimately overthrown. While the impact of formal education levels was less significant overall, there was a clear importance of increased civic education in mobilizing and uniting protesters.

B.   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), in its 2017 Posture Statement, posits democracy strengthening as a key objective on the continent.[1] Research indicates a crucial vehicle for promoting democracy in African countries is the provision for term limits within their constitutions.[2] The United States and its allies, as well as numerous ideologically aligned NGOs, hold that African leaders must respect constitutionally mandated term limits because turnover of power is a key ingredient in what is known as

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[1] Africa Command, "AFRICOM 2017 Posture Statement," accessed October 15, 2016, www.africom/mil/media-room/document 28720/africom-2017posture-statement.

[2] Daniel N. Posner and Daniel J. Young, "Term Limits and the Transfer of Power," December 2016, http://danielnposner.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Posner-Young-chapter-161205-distrib.pdf.

"democratic consolidation": the task of making a young democracy secure and durable.[3] Posner and Young write that knowing when one will relinquish power is perhaps the best way to constrain African leaders wishing to hold onto it.[4] When leaders hold onto power for long periods, it prevents the democracy from consolidating. Dimitru and Hayat note that non-consolidated democracies are more vulnerable to setbacks.[5] Prolonged power without accountability allows for corruption, entrenchment of patronage networks, personal enrichment of the leader at the expense of the people, and numerous other abuses that lead to political violence. Wilmot writes that term limits are viewed as a "powerful antidote" to such problems because they decrease barriers to political participation, something she describes as a key element of democracy.[6]

Attempts by African leaders to extend or abolish term limits mandated in their constitutions are a relatively new phenomenon. Much of the literature on term limits in Africa focuses on the incentives leaders' face in adhering to or challenging term limits. In contrast, this investigation emphasizes the important role of societal factors, particularly demographic factors and changes in civil society, in influencing the outcome of contests over term limits. Factors identified from the study of Burkina Faso will be useful in assessing the likelihood of a leader's success or failure in other African countries and understanding when and why term limits are more likely to prevail.

[3] Andreas Schedler, "What is Democratic Consolidation?" *Project Muse* 9, no. 2 (1998): 91, doi: 10.1353/jod.1998.0030.

[4] Posner and Young, "Term Limits."

[5] Alexandra Dimitru and Raphie Hayat, *Sub-Saharan Africa: Politically More Stable, but Still Fragile* (Utrecht, The Netherlands: Rabobank Economic Research, 2015), https://economics.rabobank.com/publications/ 2015/december/sub-saharan-africa-politically-more-stable-but-still-fragile/.

[6] Claire Wilmot, "How and Why Term Limits Matter," African Arguments, October 5, 2015, http://africanarguments.org/2015/10/05/how-and-why-term-limits-matter/.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Background: The Phenomenon of Term Limit Change

Thirty-three of forty-eight post-Cold War constitutions in sub-Saharan Africa contained term limits for presidents, typically two terms.[7] At the time the constitutions were ratified, these countries had little experience with democracy, and their level of commitment to this form of government was unclear. As leaders approached term limits, some of them began looking for ways to extend their stays in office and, more often than not, have succeeded in amending their constitutions to extend or abolish term limits. Between 1990 and 2015, leaders of sixteen countries sought to amend two-term limit clauses in their respective constitutions; eleven of those attempts have been successful and at least two more are promising success by the end of 2017.[8]

Between 1960 and 1980, following independence from European colonial rule, African leaders were often described as "big men" or "strong men." Operating in what Dulani describes as a "culture of personal rule," some leaders in these regimes acted largely with impunity, relying on entrenched power, often amassing great personal wealth and creating systems of patronage that helped ensure their continued rule.[9] Civil strife was widespread during this period and transitions of power during this period were largely the result of military coups.[10]

During the Cold War, these authoritarian regimes continued. However, at the end of the Cold War and through the mid-1990s, many African states adopted systems of government resembling those of Western democracies. These efforts to install democratic regimes were a result both of encouragement from primarily Western donors who, in

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[7] Dimitru and Hayat, *Sub-Saharan Africa*.

[8] Posner and Young, "Term Limits."

[9] Boniface Madalitso Dulani, "Personal Rule and Presidential Term Limits in Africa" (PhD. Diss., Michigan State University, 2011), http://etd.lib.msu.edu/islandora/object/etd%3A1526/datastream/OBJ/view.

[10] Dimitru and Hayat, *Sub-Saharan Africa*.

some cases, now contributed substantial portions of some state budgets,[11] and pressure from within a county's own population.[12] Bratton and Van de Walle describe this opening of authoritarian regimes as a "break welcomed by … African citizens eager to exercise long denied civil rights."[13] Countries ratified constitutions and began to hold elections. Some countries adopted and sustained liberal institutions. Some have thwarted their presidents' attempts to amend the constitution to extend term limits. In Zambia in 2001, for example, President Frederick Chiluba faced a divide on the issue within his own ruling party, and was therefore not able to get the amendment through parliament even though his own party dominated parliament.[14] In Malawi in 2002, when President Bakili Mulizi introduced an amendment to allow him to run for a third term, the amendment did not pass in the rarer circumstance that the president's party held less than 50% of seats in the national legislature. In the end, Mulizi was not popular enough with the coalition government to effect a change in the two-term limit.[15] In both cases, the consolidation of democratic institutions had undermined each president's power to unilaterally influence political outcomes and was, therefore, indicated a stronger democracy. Other countries, however, despite having constitutions and the appearance of democracy, have continued various forms of autocratic rule.[16] In some countries, leaders have been successful in holding on to power even in the presence of multi-party elections and other democratic norms.[17]

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[11] Ionel Zamfir, *Democracy in Africa: Power Alternation and Presidential Term Limits* (Briefing PE580.880) (London: European Parliamentary Research Service, 2016), http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI(2016)580880.

[12] Michael Bratton and Nicholas van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), xiii.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Daniel Vencovsky, "Presidential Term Limits," *Conflict Trends* (April 2007): 15–21, http://www.accord.org.za/publication/conflict-trends-2007-2/?wpv_view_count=15871-TCPID563&wpv_paged=3.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Zamfir, *Democracy in Africa.*

[17] Alexander Baturo, *Democracy, Dictatorship, and Term Limits* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014).

Baturo writes that leaders who attempt to extend their mandates display "constitutional imagination" by using a variety of approaches to accomplish that goal.[18] *Democratic Digest*, an online source providing news and analysis on democracy assistance, identifies four tactics commonly used by leaders in their attempts to extend or abolish term limits.[19] Some leaders simply argue that because they were already in power when term limits were instituted, the limits do not apply to them retroactively. For example, in Equatorial Guinea and Angola, countries with two-term limits instituted during their presidents' first terms, leaders argued they were entitled to run for a third term because the first one did not count against the limit. A second tactic, used by leaders in Cameroon, Algeria, Uganda, Djibouti and Togo, is called the "Legislative Assist" in which the leader removes term limits with the approval of parliament. In these instances, there is often abuse of the democratic process in that the leader's party is in control of parliament and part of the leader's network of patronage. Additionally, the president may bribe or intimidate legislators outside of his patronage network. Similar to the "Legislative Assist," a third tactic used is "The Art of the Referendum."[20] Leaders turning to referendums to extend their rule include those of Chad and Republic of Congo. In some cases, these referendums are anything but democratic. Referendums are rigged in any number of ways: bribery, coercion, intimidation, voter registration fraud, and discriminatory access to polling places.[21] The fourth tactic, the "Kitchen Sink Approach" has been used in Rwanda and Burundi.[22] When one tactic does not work or seems inadequate, leaders have used combinations of strategies in order to attempt to extend their stays in office.

Some scholars see a positive aspect to these mandate extensions in that they have usually been accomplished through institutional means rather than by the president

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Elen Aghekyan, "Autocrats Bag of Tricks for Staying in Power," *Democratic Digest*, February 12, 2016, http://www.demdigest.net/tag/autocrats/.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Anneke Van Woudenberg and Ida Sawyer, "Africa's Softer, Gentler Coups d'Etat," *Foreign Policy*, November 3, 2015, http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/11/03/africas-softer-gentler-coups-detat/.

[22] Aghekyan, "Autocrats Bag of Tricks."

abolishing the entire constitution or openly resorting to violence. McKie notes that in virtually every case, leaders "evade term limits through legal channels," following the law while circumventing the intent of the constitution.[23] Whether by a legislative vote, a popular referendum, or a court's interpretive decision, the president simply attempts to change the portion of the constitution regarding term limits.

A review of the literature reveals four sources of influence that may impact whether leaders can be successful in amending term limit provisions. For purposes of discussion, I organize existing explanations into the following broad and somewhat overlapping categories:

1. Governmental factors—having to do with the structure and functioning of the government, governmental constraints on leaders, and the motivations of the leaders themselves.

2. Societal factors—regarding the strength of social organizations, formal education levels, income levels, average age of the population, poverty levels, ethnic diversity, urbanization

3. International factors—including both incentives provided by the International community in the form of various types of aid and advantage an individual African country may have with the international community based on the presence of highly demand natural resources.

4. Geographical factors—including the impact of neighbors, natural resources, the presence of ports, and terrain.

The following sections will discuss each of these categories and factors within them that explain, at least in part, why some leaders achieve mandate extensions while others do not.

2. Governmental Factors

a. *Personal Cost/Benefit Calculations by the Leader*

By far the most frequent theme in the literature regarding whether a leader will attempt to stay or will go is the unconstrained capacity for unilateral action enjoyed by

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[23] Kristin McKie, "Comparative Continuismo: Presidential Term Limit Adherence across Developing Democracies" (working paper, Kellogg Institute, Notre Dame, IN, 2016).

leaders. Baturo advocates that presidents themselves determine their own behavior with regard to succession and suggests that understanding the decision a president will make requires a proper understanding of the costs and benefits of staying in office for that particular leader.[24] Posner and Young appear to agree, hypothesizing that leaders attempt to stay in power when benefits of doing so are high and costs are low. Considerations that may influence a president's decision include an affinity for power, opportunities for personal enrichment, fear of prosecution or marginalization after leaving office, and pressure to maintain patronage networks and the ability to win elections.

Vencovsky reminds us that the attraction of power remains a strong motivating factor for many African leaders and that some African elections are "heavily burdened by advantages incumbents have at their disposal."[25] Prominent among these advantages are patron-client networks through which the president, who also usually heads the political party, is able to distribute state resources throughout his population as he sees fit in order to appease those that might threaten his rule.[26] Differing levels of clientelism across countries, therefore, may be one explanation for why some leaders are more or less likely to attempt extensions of their mandates and remain in power. Similarly, in countries where leaders may stand to significantly increase their personal wealth, attempts to extend mandates may be more likely than in countries that do not offer such opportunities. For some leaders, an affinity for power may drive a desire to remain in office in a country with few constraints to limit that power.

Personal traits of the president may contribute to his decision regarding adherence to term limits. A frequent explanation for the success of leaders who are able to extend their mandates is the dominance of the leader's party including control of the legislature and judiciary. McKie notes that when founders of a new political party are the first party figure to hold the presidency, the party is less able to "play a constraining role on

[24] Baturo, *Democracy*.

[25] Vencovsky, "Presidential Term Limits."

[26] Ibid.

ambitions to evade term limits."[27] Therefore, differences in the status of the president as a party founder and his consequent ability to exert control over legislators and judges may explain differences in his adherence or lack of adherence to term limits.

Leaders' motivations for contravention of term limits are not always completely self-serving. They may include fears and pressures from other parties. For example, as much as a leader might not want to leave power because of the loss of access to state resources, those in the leader's network may also provide pressure for him to remain in power so that they continue to receive resources as part of their leader's network.[28] Additionally, in some countries, the constraint of potential prosecution by a future administration may be an incentive for their leader to attempt to stay in office whereas in a country with little or no danger of future prosecution, the leader might be more likely to leave at the end of his mandate.[29] In countries that have little or no experience with leaders out of power, fears of marginalization and possibly loss of wealth once out of office might prompt a leader to attempt mandate extension.[30]

b.   *Governmental Constraints on Mandate Extensions*

Many questions arise as to why African leaders who have chosen to attempt mandate extensions attain divergent results. The degree to which a leader is successful in achieving constitutional change to extend his mandate depends on a number of factors in each of the four categories mentioned above, most of which fall into the government category. No matter how much a president might want to stay in office in order to gain wealth or avoid possible prosecution or marginalization, the legislature passes amendments and the judiciary that renders interpretive decisions regarding constitutionality. Thus, differences in causes of or constraints to constitutional change from one country to another appear to be fundamental to explaining why term limits are

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[27] McKie, "Comparative Continuismo."

[28] Vencovsky, "Presidential Term Limits."

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

upheld in some cases and overturned in others. Understanding the balance of power between the president and institutions of government is an essential piece of this puzzle.

The degree to which the president controls his own party compared to the degree of horizontal accountability, as discussed by Opalo,[31] would appear be an explanatory factor for differences in outcomes when presidents have sought to extend term limits. The constitutional provision for term limits is aimed at protecting horizontal accountability and the logic of that might dictate that legislators and judges would act to enforce term limits in order to maintain their power relative to that of the president. In fact, however, they have, in a significant number of instances, voted to extend or abolish term limits.[32] McKie takes what she describes as an "actor-centric" view of this behavior, finding that legislative and judicial "veto players"[33] support the president's wishes when they believe it is in their best interest to do so.[34] That is to say, they believe whether or not he stays determines whether they stay. The extent to which horizontal accountability provides or fails to provide robust checks and balances may explain the different outcomes for leaders attempting to extend mandates.

Similarly, the degree of cohesion of the leader's party and the competitive strength of opposition political parties may affect horizontal accountability and thereby a leader's ability to accomplish constitutional change with regard to term limits. Differences in these areas from one country to another may explain why some leaders succeed and others fail in their attempts to stay in office. As seen in Zambia and Malawi, when leaders do not have sufficient legislative support, they may be constrained to go.

While no one of these within government factors may, in itself, explain one leader's success in evading term limits and another leader's failure, their combined impact and the interaction among them may offer useful insights into why some leaders

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[31] Ken Opalo, "Term Limits and Democratic Consolidation in sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons from Burundi," July 30, 2015, ConstitutionNet, http://www.constitutionnet.org/news/term-limits-and-democratic-consolidation-sub-saharan-africa-lessons-burundi.

[32] McKie, "Comparative Continuismo."

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

are able to stay while others go. The impacts of societal factors, international factors and geographical factors may serve to shift the balance of power within the government by delivering their own pressures on both the president and the institutions of government.

3.   Societal Factors

Societal factors, the second source of influence that may affect a leader's adherence to term limits, have received less direct attention in the literature. However, it could be inferred that one reason leaders are able to extend their mandates is the relative weakness and lack of involvement of society in matters of their governance. Vencovsky identifies three societal factors that affect the leader's ability to successfully extend or abolish term limits: the relative strength of civil society, the level of media independence, and the popularity of the president among the people.[35] The social factors of public education level and the degree of disparity between rural and urban outlooks, which could also be argued is related to education, may also affect a leader's success in extending his mandate.[36]

a.   *Demographics Associated with Support for Term Limits*

Dulani found that in response to AfroBarometer surveys, approximately three fourths of Africans expressed support for term limits.[37] Level of formal education appears to be an important demographic characteristic associated with this support. Yarwood notes that people with higher formal education levels tend to favor term limits at even higher rates than those with less formal education.[38] The Organization for Economic Coordination and Development (OECD) explored the social benefits of formal education, finding that higher levels of formal education (in this case, secondary school) helped to promote other behaviors associated with good government such as active citizenship

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[35] Vencovsky, "Presidential Term Limits."

[36] Stephen Lurie, "Highly Educated Countries Have Better Governments," *The Atlantic*, June 3, 2016; Robin Harding, "Urban-Rural Differences in Support for Incumbents across Africa" (working paper no. 120, Afro Barometer, 2010), http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Working%20 paper/AfropaperNo120.pdf.

[37] Dulani, "Personal Rule."

[38] Janette Yarwood, "The Power of Protest," *Journal of Democracy* 27, no. 3 (2016): 51–60.

measured in terms of increased percentages of voting, volunteering and political interest.[39] Additionally, higher levels of formal education contribute to containing violence, supporting a free press and increased use of social media.[40] Not surprisingly, voters who are more educated and those with more exposure to news media express greater support for term limits. Stephen Lurie emphasizes the importance of formal education by pointing out that, even in governments that are not democratic, "More educated societies make more accountable government."[41] When governments are more accountable to their people and the people support term limits, we can reasonably expect that the chances of having de facto adherence to term limits increases.

Urbanization is also associated with support for or opposition to mandate extension. Significant distinctions sometimes exist between the political views and preferences of urban and rural populations. Project for the Study of the 21st Century (PS21), a global think tank, reports that rural and urban populations have different priorities. Rural populations are more likely to support incumbents.[42] In Burundi, for example, President Pierre Nkurunziza relied heavily on his base of rural support in his bid for a third term. In fact, he negatively characterized his opposition as being urban based.[43] To these rural populations, relative stability can be associated with continuity in leadership. Where countries have larger rural populations, we may find that it is easier for incumbents to extend their mandates.[44]

Cities, on the other hand, possess several attributes that render them more susceptible to opposition against mandate extensions. Yarwood notes that young urban

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Lurie, "Highly Educated Countries."

[42] Eric Mwiine-Mugaju, "Are Presidential Term Limits in East Africa Checks and Balances That Don't Balance?" Project for the Study of the 21st Century, October 13, 2015, https://projects21.org/2015/10/13/are-presidential-term-limits-in-east-africa-checks-and-balances-that-dont-balance/.

[43] George Omandi, "The New Assault on Presidential Term Limits in Africa: Focus on Burundi," *The African Leadership Centre Newsletter*, September 2015, http://www.africanleadershipcentre. org/attachments/article/385/The%20New%20Assault%20On%20Presidential%20Term%20Limits%20In% 20Africa_Focus%20On%20Burundi.pdf.

[44] Mwiine-Mugaju, "Are Presidential Term Limits."

male residents tend to support term limits to a greater extent than older rural residents.[45] Urban populations tend to be younger. In 2015, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation reported that three quarters of the urban population in Africa is under 35 years of age.[46] Since the demographic of youth is correlated to support for term limits, we can expect urban areas to support more frequent turnover of power. Additionally, PS21 found that cities symbolize a place of refuge for the elites or incumbent government forces."[47] Here, the exigencies of the ruling class are in plain view, which could contribute to support for more frequent turnovers of power.

b.   *Civil Society Organizations*

When society is organized into civil society organizations (CSOs), these entities function as independent actors and are uniquely positioned to expose and rebuke governmental incompetence or corruption and to pressure for reform. Civil society organizations may be NGOs, faith based organizations, business forums, think tanks, labor unions, philanthropic foundations, or grassroots organizations.[48] They build capacity by bringing resources and expertise to bear on problems faced by the societies in which they operate. Dulani explains the importance of civil society activism describing the need for a "critical mass of civil society that plays a central role in the governance arena including helping to hold governments accountable."[49] Numerous CSOs throughout Africa have recognized and have become increasingly vocal regarding the importance of term limits and are working hard to politically mobilize the majority of Africans who express support for term limits.[50]

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[45] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest."

[46] Mo Ibrahim Foundation, *2015 Facts and Figures: African Urban Dynamics* (London: Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2015), http://static.moibrahimfoundation.org/u/2015/11/19115202/2015-Facts-Figures-African-Urban-Dynamics.pdf.

[47] Mwiine-Mugaju, "Are Presidential Term Limits."

[48] "The IMF and Civil Society Organizations," International Monetary Fund, April 5, 2016, http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/civ.htm.

[49] Madalitso Dulani, "Personal Rule."

[50] Wilmot, "How and Why Term Limits Matter."

Dulani explains the disconnect between public support for term limits and the number of leaders who have been successful in extending/abolishing them in this way: "ordinary African citizens (are rarely) allowed formal space to make their voices heard in these debates. Instead, term-limit advocates fight for space, often in the street and sometimes at great risk to their lives."[51] Recent research does include accounts of protests against attempts by leaders to extend term limits in countries such as Burundi, Republic of Congo and Burkina Faso. In many instances, those who dared to protest were arrested or otherwise intimidated or detained.[52] As the expectations of Africans climb and lead to a growing push for government accountability, Baturo writes optimistically that those nations with "stronger civil societies will be able to mobilize against presidents who seek to extend their mandates."[53] In some countries, the primary way this happen is in mass protests. Differences in civil society—the degree to which civil society understands why term limits are important and is capable of staging powerful protests in support of them—may explain why leaders achieve third terms in some countries and fail to achieve them in other.

4.   International Factors

International influences can play a role in determining whether a leader experiences success or failure in extending term limits. Recently, the United States and Western donors have increased public pressure for African leaders to honor term limits.[54] In one such example, in July of 2015, U.S. President Barack Obama spoke to the African Union describing term limits as a core feature of democracy; saying, "Africa's

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[51] Boniface Dulani, "African Publics Strongly Support Term Limits, Resist Leaders Efforts to Extend Their Tenure," *AfroBarometer Dispatch*, no 30, May 25, 2016, http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Dispatches/ab_r6_dispatchno30.pdf.

[52] Van Woudenberg and Sawyer, "Africa's Softer, Gentler Coups d'Etat."

[53] Baturo, *Democracy*.

[54] Scott Stearns, "U.S.: African Leaders Should Honor Constitutional Term Limits," Voice of America: Africa, July 9, 2014, http://www.voanews.com/a/us-says-african-leaders-should-honor-constitutional-term-limits/1954274.html.

democratic progress is at risk when leaders refuse to step aside when their terms end."[55] Additionally, the United States has imposed sanctions, a recent example being against officials from the DRC when, in 2016, President Joseph Kabila refused to schedule a presidential election when his mandate was ending.[56] Pressure to abide by term limits has also come from within Africa itself as the AU has called for respect for term limits.[57] In addition, African opinion leaders have championed the need for term limits. One such leader, Sudanese billionaire Mo Ibrahim, has established a $5 million prize for "a democratic head of state that has left office in the last three years and demonstrated excellent leadership." In 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2013, the prize was not awarded because no leader stepped down.[58]

In addition to public opinion pressure, international pressure stemming from the impact of donor aid has also been influential in some countries in which a leader sought a third term. Baturo contrasts the experiences of Malawi and Uganda. In Malawi, a county in which almost half of the national budget is dependent on support from donors, President Muluzi's bid to extend his time in office was weakened by the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) decision to withdraw aid. In Uganda, on the other hand, Baturo explains that donors did not exert much influence and President Museveni was successful in his 2005 bid for a third term.[59] Posner and Young argue that African presidents do feel constrained by international pressure. In support of their argument, they point to the fact that the median level of foreign aid (as a percentage of GDP) in countries where presidents did not attempt to seek a third term was 12.1 percent compared to 7.3 percent

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[55] Adrienne LeBas, "Term Limits and Beyond: Africa's Democratic Hurdles," *Current History* (May 2016): 169–174, http://www.currenthistory.com/CurrentHistory_LeBas.pdf.

[56] Claire Felter, "Africa's 'Leaders for Life' Syndrome," Council on Foreign Relations, Backgrounder, April 10, 2017, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/africas-leaders-life-syndrome.

[57] Conor Gaffey, "Africa's Third Term Problem," *Newsweek*, December 15, 2015, http://www.newsweek.com/africa-third-term-problem-cling-power-403440.

[58] Fareed Zakaria, "Where Are Africa's Great Leaders?" *CNN World: Global Public Square* (blog), October 19, 2013, http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2013/10/19/where-are-africas-great-leaders/.

[59] Baturo, *Democracy*.

in countries where presidents did attempt to seek a third term—and largely succeeded.[60] Furthermore, Baturo found that successful tenure expansions were more likely among leaders with weak linkages to the West.[61] If that correlation is reversed, it appears that association with the West is associated with respect for term limits.

Yet despite instances in some countries when international public opinion pressure or the conditionality of aid appear to have influenced adherence to term limits, some point to concerns about the effectiveness and limitations of international influence. While Opalo believes there is a role for the international community to play in supporting respect for term limits, he has pointed to Burundi in 2014 as an example of when, because of geopolitical concerns, the international community did not speak out unequivocally against third terms.[62] Matfess has also noted that economic relationships have not been "unduly strained" by mandate extensions, pointing to World Bank data regarding Foreign Direct Investment flows that show only a slight decline in the amount of FDI received between the years prior to the repeal of term limits and the year after the term limit was repealed. This indicates that there was no real financial consequence for leaders who extended their mandates.[63] Adding to the mix of potential impacts of international influences is the increasing number of non-traditional players/donors in the African aid market. Countries like Brazil, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Russia, China and India are providing development assistance to African countries, with China by far being the largest.[64] One would not logically expect conditions of aid from non-Western donors to foster respect for presidential term limits.

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[60] Daniel N. Posner and Daniel J. Young, "The Institutionalization of Political Power in Africa," *Journal of Democracy* 18, no. 3 (2007): 126–140, doi: 10.1353/jod.2007.0053.

[61] Baturo, *Democracy*.

[62] Opalo, "Term Limits."

[63] Hilary Matfess, "Time's Up: Africa's Democracies Need to Reconcile with Term Limits—And Not Just to Keep the West Happy," Quartz Africa, October 31, 2015, https://qz.com/537093/africas-democracies-need-to-reconcile-with-term-limits-and-not-just-to-keep-the-west-happy/.

[64] Peter Kragelund, *The Potential Role of Non-traditional Donors' Aid in Africa* (Issue Paper No. 11) (Geneva: International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development, 2010), http://www.ictsd.org/downloads/2011/03/the-potential-role-of-non-traditional-donorse28099-aid-in-africa.pdf.

Gibson, Hoffman, and Jablonski write that, for the most part, research has not shown that aid has a robust impact on democratic consolidation, which presumably includes adherence to term limits. They argue that aid, in particular, may impede democratization when it is fungible and, therefore, "increases the ability of governments to engage in patronage spending."[65] However, when aid is provided under conditions of increased donor oversight, Gibson, Hoffman, and Jablonski find that it can positively affect democratization,[66] including regard for term limits.

Differing levels of need for donor aid and the impact of international opinion may explain why some leaders succeed in staying and others have to go. The degree to which one country is vulnerability to consequences of negative public opinion such as reduced tourism or trade and another is not, may explain the success or failure of a leader to stand for a third term. Among aid dependent countries, differences in available providers of aid, the conditionality of aid, and the fungibility of aid may explain why some leaders succeed and others fail in extending or abolishing term limits.

5.   Natural Resources/Government Revenue

Geographical factors might also influence whether or not leaders are successful in extending their terms in office. As of 2015, six of eight leaders in oil-producing countries had attempted to extend their stays in power, while the percentage is much lower in non-oil producing countries. There are several ways that resource wealth may contribute to leaders' ability to extend their mandates. First, the "rentier effect," described by Michael Ross and others, may increase both the pressure and the ability of ruling incumbents to monopolize state resources, rule through patronage networks and, as a result, possess both the pressure and ability to extend their mandates. Ross reports that wealth from natural resources, particularly oil, is associated with reduced democratic accountability and that even in democratic states it can, under certain conditions, promote the breakdown of democratic governments. He specifically mentions the vulnerability of low

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[65] Clark Gibson, Borak Hoffman, and Ryan Jablonski, "Did Aid Promote Democracy in Africa? The Role of Technical Assistance in Africa's Transitions," *World Development* 68, no. C (2015): 323–335.

[66] Ibid.

and middle-income countries such as those in sub-Saharan Africa.[67] We may also speculate that nascent, non-consolidated democracies would be more susceptible to these effects than older, more stable democracies, including the extension of mandates.

Second, relative to aid-dependent countries, countries with resource wealth may be less susceptible to pressures from donors to adhere to democratic constitutional rule. International Monetary Fund economist Rabah Areziki argues that, like aid, income from resource wealth eases spending constraints on governments whereas, unlike aid, it comes with no donor strings attached.[68] Additionally, resource wealth often represents substantially more money than the amount of aid received,[69] providing resources for strengthening and extending patronage as well as a cushion for mismanagement, both of which are likely to increase a leader's capacity to control his party and successfully accomplish extension of his mandate.

Third, taxpayers in resource-rich countries may be less empowered to exert influence on their executive leaders. When government is not reliant upon citizens for revenue in the form of taxes, it is more likely to be unaccountable to them and, as well, citizens may feel less invested and thereby be less likely to participate in government or to monitor government spending.[70] In resource-rich countries, governments receive their largest revenues from extractive industries rather than from citizens. Furthermore, resource revenues are often secret, further decreasing citizen awareness of or involvement in government spending.[71] The Natural Resource Governance Institute reports an increased likelihood that governments in resource-rich countries will be autocratic. More

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[67] Michael L. Ross, *The Politics of the Resource Curse: A Review* (Los Angeles: University of California, 2013), https://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/ross/papers/working/Ross%20-%20Politics%20of%20the%20resource%20curse.pdf.

[68] Rabah Arezki and Ritwik Banerjee, "Aid and Oil," *Finance and Development* 51, no. 1 (2014): 48–50.

[69] Ibid.

[70] "The Resource Curse: The Politics and Economic Challenges of Natural Resource Wealth," *NRGI Reader* (March 2015), https://resourcegovernance.org/sites/default/files/nrgi_Resource-Curse.pdf.

[71] Ibid.

money for patronage coupled with reduced citizen involvement may explain why. It may also be an explanation for why differences in the presence or absence of natural resources may account for the success of some leaders and the failure or others in extending their mandates.

This literature review indicates the interdependence and interaction of factors in the four categories discussed—governmental, societal, international and geographical. The research question is made more complex because a change in one may impact the other three. The two factors that appear to be most subject to influence from within a particular country and that have the best potential to be studied within that scope are governmental and societal. The literature review yielded far more information on government influences regarding mandate extension than on societal influences, although there are references to the idea that African civil societies are becoming more political and more engaged in the term limit debate. Since this research is conducted as a within country study and there is less research on societal factors, it is appropriate that the study focus on societal influences.

D. POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Much of the existing literature focuses on the costs and benefits of extending mandates. That literature, however, tends to ignore the ways that costs can change due to demographic and societal changes. One potential hypothesis that emerges from the literature review is that leaders have been successful in extending their mandates when their power is greater than that of society. In the literature, much attention is paid to the factors that strengthen the leader's position—legacy, patronage networks, military, control of the ruling party, means necessary to bribe or coerce. Less attention is paid to factors that strengthen society. One might speculate that among such factors are literacy rates, median income, urbanization, functioning civil society organizations, access to news media, and free press. This thesis will investigate the hypothesis that societal factors are critical for understanding when leaders will be constrained by societal groups in extending their stays in office.

My investigation will focus on three broad topics: education, urbanization and civil society, and will explore their synergistic impact on the power of society to constrain government leaders. Civic education matters because, as we have seen, it increases the level of civic engagement among citizens and enhances the ability of citizens to participate in public institutions and contribute to civil society organizations.

Urbanization matters because it concentrates social power in cities. As discussed previously, governmental power has largely been there already. Urbanization also changes the social fabric of the city. New, mostly younger migrants come expecting to improve their living conditions. Stark inequalities are more visible in urban than in rural areas, particularly when those inequalities affect thousands of people. The strength-in-numbers potential of social unrest and violence may, in itself, serve as a constraint on governmental leaders. Urbanization makes possible the power that emerges from connection. When the connections are among more educated citizens, then urbanization can drive governments to be more accountable.

Civil society matters because civil society organizations have the ability to focus attention and resources on needed problem solving or reform such as sanitation in the slums or African leaders who attempt to abolish/expand term limits. Arguably, the strength or weakness of civil society organizations depends on their legitimacy among the people they wish to serve. Better-educated citizens are more likely to understand the purposes and strategies of the civil society organization and be able to support and contribute to it. When those citizens are in urban areas, the power of connection—ideological and proximal—is brought to bear.

While the investigation focuses on the factors of urbanization, education, and the functioning of Civil Society Organizations, other factors that may emerge and appear to have predictive value will be noted and shared with the reader in Chapter IV.

E.   RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis will conduct a within-case comparison of two specific events in Burkina Faso, comparing the period of constitutional change leading up to and including the 2005 and 2010 elections, in which President Blaise Compaore successfully ran for a

third and fourth term, to the 2011–2014 period ending in a coup in which Compaore was forced out of power for attempting to abolish constitutionally mandated term limits. The thesis will compare the social and political contexts surrounding each event and use comparative case analysis to determine what changes may have occurred over time to prevent Compaore from succeeding where he had before in extending his stay in office.

Burkina Faso is unique in offering the opportunity for comparing success and failure of the African third-term phenomenon in a single state because there have been multiple episodes surrounding changes made to Article 37 of the constitution, the Article regarding term limits—removal, reinstatement, resetting the clock, and an attempted removal for a second time. This methodological approach is appropriate for this thesis because the objective is to contribute to the body of research regarding how societal elements can evolve and strengthen to the point of being able to check the power of an executive.

This research will be based on the hypothesis that, in 2014, there were additional effective constraints on President Compaore and that these constraints likely came from public sentiment and civil society within Burkina Faso. In order to conduct this analysis, I will rely on previous accounts and research conducted on the individual events in order to compare and decipher what social changes occurred in the approximate decade between the events that allowed the public to organize and prohibit Compaore from extending his stay in office as he had before.

Data will be collected from scholarly sources as well as from respected contemporaneous sources when available. Most importantly, primary data from in-country interviews conducted by the author and project advisor with Burkina Faso government officials and civil society representatives will be relied on heavily for context and understanding of the societal changes in Burkina Faso.

This thesis consists of four parts. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter II will discuss social opposition to President Compaore as it existed between 1997 and 2005, the time of his successful mandate extension. Chapter III will trace and explain changes in society between 2005 and the successful overthrow of Compaore in 2014,

preventing his second attempt at mandate extension. The concluding chapter, Chapter IV will analyze driving forces of the changes in society and explore what predictive value they have for assessing the likelihood that leaders in other African countries may be able to extend their mandates.

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II. CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

A. INTRODUCTION

In 2005, the president of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaore, ran successfully for a third term in office despite a constitutional provision that limited presidents to two terms. Compaore justified this third term bid based on a technicality. He first ran for office in 1991 following the adoption of a new constitution that contained a presidential term limit provision of two terms of seven years each.[72] In 1997, prior to Compaore's run for re-election and at his instigation, Compaore's Congress for Democracy and Progress Party (CDP) passed an amendment removing term limits from the Constitution.[73] In 1998, Compaore was re-elected, this time under a constitution with no provision for term limits.[74] By 2000, lingering protests compelled Compaore to reinstate term limits: in this case, two terms of five years each.[75] However, when Compaore sought a third term in 2005, he and his supporters argued that the 2000 constitutional amendment imposing term limits could not be applied retroactively to him, and, under the constitution in place in 2005, he was therefore entitled to run for two five-year terms.[76] In 2010, he ran successfully for a fourth term based on the same technicality.[77]

This chapter will discuss how and why society was not at this time empowered to stop Compaore from resetting the clock and running for a third term. It will explore the social and political context in which the 2005 election occurred because it was in 2005

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[72] John Mukum Mbaku, "Burkina Faso Protests Extending Presidential Term Limits," *Africa in Focus* (blog), October 30, 2014, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2014/10/30/burkina-faso-protests-extending-presidential-term-limits/.

[73] "Burkina Faso Votes for President," *BBC*, November 13, 2005, http://new.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/443296.stm.

[74] Lila Chouli, "Popular Protests in Burkina Faso," *Pambazuka News*, March 30, 2011, https://www.pambazuka.org/governance/popular-protests-burkina-faso.

[75] Freedom House, *Burkina Faso, 2005* (Freedom in the World Reports) (New York: Freedom House, 2005), https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2005/brukina-faso.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Freedom House, *Burkina Faso, 2011* (Freedom in the World Reports) (New York: Freedom House, 2011), https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2011/burkina-faso.

that Compaore first evaded term limits and ran for a third term. Once he had been successful in resetting the clock for 2005, his running in the 2010 election was almost certain as he would not need to extend his mandate again until 2015. Focusing specific attention on the relevance of the three focuses of this study—urbanization, education, and the function of civil society organizations—this chapter will examine the nature of these societal factors as they existed during the period of constitutional change beginning with the 1997 removal of term limits from the Constitution and continuing to the time of Compaore's third term victory in 2005. This chapter will analyze how, during these years, the balance of power between society and Compaore fluctuated as he abolished and then reinstated term limits into the Constitution. It will describe the sources of social opposition to Compaore at this time and explain why, due to their state of development, ideology, and intention, they were not empowered to constrain Compaore's extension of his mandate in 2005. Furthermore, the chapter will recount an instance of societal opposition to Compaore, which is important for two reasons: first, it had significant impact on societal opposition to Compaore throughout the remainder of his tenure, and, second, it resulted in Compaore's reinstating term limits into the 2000 constitution. Although his overthrow occurred fourteen years later, the reinstatement of term limits in 2000 was pivotal to Compaore's eventual ousting.

B.   URBANIZATION, EDUCATION, AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

An explanation of Compaore's urban opposition will be helpful to our understanding of the influence of urbanization, education and civil society. In a 2017 interview, Dr. Abdoul Karim Saidou with the Centre pour la Gouvernance Democratique (CGD) explained that opposition to Compaore was almost entirely urban.[78] For context, Burkina Faso's urban population more than doubled between 1998 and 2010, increasing from 1,810,997 to 4,011,970, and increasing as a percentage of total population from

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[78] Abdoul Karim Saidou, interview with author, March 3, 2017.

16.5 percent to 25.7 percent.[79] During this period, however, increases in urban population did not mean much in terms of preventing Compaore from extending his mandate.

Five sources of opposition to Compaore existed: opposition political parties, trade unions, human rights organizations, civil society organizations, and Thomas Sankara loyalists. Although there were many opposing political parties during this period, Compaore was never threatened electorally by the political opposition. There are predictable reasons for this. Compaore dominated the rural vote because he had the support of the rural Mossi chiefs, and the rural population remained more than 50 percent of Burkina Faso's total population throughout Compaore's rule.[80] Compaore had an extensive and effective patronage network that garnered and maintained support for him.[81] If ever he needed more votes, he had the resources to buy them.[82] While this chapter may mention political opponents in the context of other discussions, our focus will be on four sources of social opposition, by far the most influential of which were trade unions/students.

In the early years of Compaore's rule, the power of civil society rested primarily with trade unions, which played a central opposition role in Burkina Faso, protesting against limitations on workers' rights since the time of its independence in 1960.[83] Rupley, Bangali, and Diamitani explain that in much of Africa, the trade union movement has little independence or influence.[84] In Burkina Faso, however, the 1991 constitution, which the unions had influenced, gave workers the right to organize, to engage in collective bargaining, and to strike for improved working conditions and higher wages.[85]

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[79] World Bank, "Urban Population," accessed October 15, 2016, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS.

[80] Professor Moussa Willy Bantenga, interview with author, March 1, 2017.

[81] "Burkina Faso Country Report," Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2010, http://www.bti2010.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/84.0.html.

[82] Bantenga, interview.

[83] Bettina Engels, "Political Transition in Burkina Faso: The Fall of Blaise Compaore," *Governance in Africa* 2, no. 1 (2015): 3, http://doi.org/10.5334/gia.ai.

[84] Lawrence Rupley, Larissa Bangali, and Boureima Diamitani, *Historical Dictionary of Burkina Faso*, 3rd ed. (Lanham, MD: Bowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2013).

[85] Ibid.

Six large Burkinabe trade associations together with sixteen individual, independent trade unions make up the influential umbrella organization, Unite d'Action Syndicale (UAS).[86] Engels offers further insight into the functioning of the Burkinabe trade unions, explaining that they are "organized along ideological lines …and are active in fields beyond those that are directly work related."[87] Sub-Saharan Africa has been slow to develop industrially and perhaps as a consequence of that, large-scale industrial trade unions are not as prevalent as in Western countries.[88] In Burkina Faso, the largest group of trade union members is composed of civil servants, with the unions representing the fields of education and health wielding the most influence. Burkina Faso's unions also represent both secondary students and university students.[89] Engels offers insight regarding the role of trade unions as civil society activists, writing that "the fact that members of these trade unions are predominantly among the urban, well-educated middle class and that student organizations consider themselves to be trade unions, explains why alliances and joint protests by trade unions and students are relatively easy to organize and occur frequently."[90] Additionally, Engels believes these commonalities explain the urban nature of most political protests, where Burkina Faso's official language of French is spoken and where, in Burkina Faso between 1998 and 2005, urban trade union members comprised the power of civil society.[91]

Human rights organizations, civil society organizations, and Thomas Sankara loyalists are also among the social opposition. Such human rights organizations as Amnesty International and Movement Burkina des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples (MBDHP), the largest human rights organization in Burkina Faso, were active throughout Compaore's rule.[92] Although at times, as we will explore, these human rights

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[86] Engels "Political Transition."

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

organizations joined the trade unions in mass protests, they were insufficient to prevent Compaore's obtaining a third term for several reasons. First, the social opposition base was limited to only a specific section of urban society. Second, their intention was to obtain improvements in benefits for workers and to seek justice and an end to impunity. Finally, because their ideology was socialist leaning, not democratic, and therefore their focus was not on protecting term limits.

While trade unions made up the bulk of social society opposition and trade unions and human rights organizations at times joined together in opposition, other segments of civil society were not as influential in opposing Compaore between 1997 and 2005. Civil society organizations existed for a number of purposes such as benefitting women, youth, and farmers.[93] However, in the early years, according to Saidou, these civil society organizations lacked development. Often created for a charitable purpose, many such organizations had limited resources and their leadership was neither experienced with nor focused on political activism at that time.[94] After 2005, powerful civil society organizations such as the Centre for the Democratic Governance of Burkina Faso (CDG) were formed.[95] The CDG and the social changes that occurred after 2005 will be discussed in Chapter III.

Sankara Loyalist opposition members were primarily loyal to Compaore's predecessor, Thomas Sankara, a Marxist revolutionary who was assassinated in the 1987 coup that brought Compaore to power. A number of university professors were among the Sankara loyalists, and they feared violence and repression because they were familiar with assassinations and disappearances of university professors in the coup that took out Sankara.[96] Explored in Chapter III, the killing of Sankara remained a hot button issue

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[93] Herman J. Cohen, "Civil Conflict, Civil Society: A History of Political and Social Change in Burkina Faso," *PCDN* (blog), February 4, 2015, https://pcdnetwork.org/blogs/civil-conflict-civil-society-a-history-of-political-and-social-change-in-burkina-faso-by-herman-j-cohen/.

[94] Saidou, interview.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Saidou, interview; Bantenga, interview.

among many Burkinabe and Sankara's name would be an important symbol in the uprising that ousted Compaore.[97]

Although the trade unions, the MBDHP, and Sankara loyalists would challenge Compaore regularly via demonstrations, and would succeed in gaining various concessions, they were ultimately not interested in competing with Compaore at the ballot box. Compaore's most powerful opposition, the trade unions, were particularly focused on improving wages and working conditions for members.[98] Bantenga explains that Compaore kept the unions at bay through the appeasement of concessionary wage increases.[99] This met the trade unions' goal and let the public see that he responded to pressure, thereby making it important for societal groups to maintain pressure against Compaore. That unions could easily be appeased by the government and declined to participate fully in electoral politics weakened their interest and ability to mount a challenge to Compaore in the face of his efforts to run for a third term.

Internal divisions also weakened the trade unions. A May 2004 report issued by the Swedish International Development Corporation Agency (SIDA) found that the role played by Burkina Faso's trade unions in the process of democratization had been ambivalent.[100] As described by SIDA, this ambivalence is a result of a divide in the movement between a moderate wing and a "radical and revolutionary wing" with socialist roots.[101] During Compaore's rule, the revolutionary wing dominated, which is why the trade unions have opposed dictatorships and have often instigated public uprisings against government limitations on public freedoms.[102] Likewise, the leader of

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[97] Engels "Political Transition."

[98] Saidou, interview.

[99] Bantenga, interview.

[100] Swedish International Development Corporation Agency, *A Study of Political, Social and Economic Structures and Power Relationships: Burkina Faso* (Stockholm: Swedish International Development Corporation Agency, 2004), http://www.sida.se/contentassets/e34ad2cde6d64b438954091e380e5992/burkina-faso-a-study-of-political-social-and-economic-power-structures-and-relations_750.pdf.

[101] Ibid.

[102] *A Study of Political, Social and Economic Structures.*

the Human Rights movement, in Burkina Faso, the MBDHP, was, according to Saidou, a socialist leaning organization whose mission focuses on justice but not necessarily political reform.[103] These groups wanted justice in the face of violence and impunity, protection of wages and good working conditions, and social equities such as fair prices for food, but did not work to promote democracy.

Interestingly, although there were many protests against Compaore's seeking a third term leading up to the 2005 election, Saidou indicates that the constitutional term limit issue did not come to the forefront until 2013.[104] The 2005 protests were more against Compaore for reasons such as corruption, violence, impunity or rising prices, rather than protests in the interest of protecting the constitution and the term limit provisions it contained. Instead, trade unions, human rights organizations and Sankara loyalists shared socialist political motivations and associated themselves with a "clandestine" party that eventually hoped to promote a social revolution. This contributed to an apparent lack of interest on the part of Burkina Faso's strongest social groups to stop Compaore from manipulating the constitution and running for a third term.

C.   INTERACTION BETWEEN SOCIETY AND COMPAORE

The primary tool of the opposition was big, noisy, and sometimes violent protests, most often held in the country's largest city, the capital city of Ouagadougou, and sometimes the second-largest city of Bobo-Dioulasso. From the outset of his rule, the Burkinabe people found reasons to take to the streets in protest against the Compaore government. A variety of grievances sparked these protests. The early 1990s were a time of significant change in Burkina Faso and across the region.[105] Immediately after Compaore was elected to his first term in 1991, the initial phase of structural adjustment (1991–1993) was implemented and the trade unions that had been happy with the more liberal provisions of the 1991 constitution now protested the country's new economic

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[103] Saidou, interview.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Engels "Political Transition."

policy orientation toward the global market as a result of loans from the IMF and World Bank.[106]

Protests often ignited as a reaction to violence perpetrated by the Compaore government and the perceived impunity of those committing it. The 1991 Constitution contained democratic provisions such as granting free speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly. However, after Compaore was in office, many felt there was a regression toward an authoritarian regime.[107] Given the weakness of social groups as outlined in the previous section, Compaore was generally successful in employing five strategies, which were often overlapping, to ensure his hold on power could continue past his first two elected terms in office.

To Compaore, staying in power meant being on the ballot, winning elections, and not being overthrown. The first, and the strategy most clearly related to the topic of this thesis, is constitutional manipulation, a strategy that kept him on the ballot in 2005 and 2010 and gave him a technically plausible argument justifying his bids for third and fourth terms, respectively, in those years. Society was vulnerable to this tool in large part because, as described previously, Compaore's primary trade union opposition was more interested in concessions that protected wages and working conditions than in regime change.

Society was also vulnerable to Compaore's second strategy, using state resources to bolster his control. This strategy solidified Compaore's power in two ways. First, it helped him win elections by having the funds from state coffers at his disposal.[108] University of Ouagadougou history professor Willy Bantenga indicates clearly that Compaore was simply able to buy the votes needed to win.[109] It also enabled Compaore's extensive system of patronage. In 2010, the Center for Applied Policy Research at Munich University found Compaore's strategy of patronage, to be one of the main

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[106] Ibid.

[107] "Burkina Faso Country Report," Bertelsmann Stiftung.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Bantenga, interview.

reasons for the failure of the electoral process to bring about change in Burkina Faso.[110] In addition to helping Compaore win elections because beneficiaries supported his staying in office, patronage enabled Compaore to obtain loyalty from beneficiaries in times of social upheaval and in many cases to rule by "co-option rather than force.[111] This strategy made regime change more difficult, especially for a societal opposition to which the rewards of regime change were not apparent.

The third strategy, violence and repression, enabled Compaore to use the sharp edge of his administration, his much-hated private security force, The Regiment de Securite Presidentielle (RSP), to control opponents who were not amenable to patronage.[112] While it was use of the RSP that often brought protesters into the street seeking justice, society was nonetheless unable to oust Compaore. The very real threat of violence is likely one reason society was not empowered to constrain Compaore at these times. Additionally, as previously described, the protesters sought justice and because of that focus, protesters were willing to settle for concessions rather than the ousting of Compaore.

Society at this time was also ineffectual in resisting the fourth strategy, that of walking a strategic line between democracy and authoritarianism, thereby enabling Compaore to project the appearance of democracy in areas that did not threaten him, while using techniques of soft dictatorship and hard tactics of violence and brutality in areas that did.[113] For example, the trade unions were interested in the right of assembly and the right to strike. Having these rights presented them the appearance of having a strong voice, but in reality, as we have seen throughout this discussion, most often the result of the trade unions' protests was that they settled for concessions.

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[110] "Burkina Faso Country Report," Bertelsmann Stiftung.

[111] Peter Dorrie, "Burkina Faso: Blaise Compaore: The Politics of Personal Enrichment," African Arguments, August 15, 2012, http://africanarguments.org/2012/08/15/burkina-faso-blaise-compaore-and-the-politics-of-personal-enrichment-by-peter-dorrie

[112] Omar Mohamed and Lily Kuo, "The Story of the Elite Presidential Guard that Overthrew Burkina Faso's Government," Quartz Africa, September 17, 2015, https://qz.com/504208/the-story-of-the-elite-presidential-guard-that-overthrew-burkina-fasos-government/.

[113] Mbaku, "Burkina Faso Protests."

On rare occasions, however, Compaore's fifth and, arguably, most important strategy of calculated appeasements enabled him to continue to placate particular groups such as the trade unions and to calm volatile situations that posed a threat to him. On these occasions, society's bargaining power was stronger, but still not sufficient to prevent his becoming a third term president.

D.   AN EARLY EXAMPLE OF SOCIETY'S ABILITY TO CONSTRAIN COMPAORE

Although this chapter focuses primarily on the reasons that society did not exert meaningful constraints on Compaore during his attempts to run for third and fourth terms, an uprising in 1998 provides some clues as to how changes in urbanization and civil society eventually served to increase the pressure on Compaore. The first mass protests of Compaore's rule occurred in December of 1998. They resulted in a lasting power shift between Compaore and society and continued to energize the opposition until Compaore's overthrow in 2014. The protests were triggered by the murder of well-known journalist Norbert Zongo, publisher and editor of the leading opposition newspaper *L'independant*.[114] Three other men were also killed: Zongo's brother, another journalist, and a driver. The bodies were discovered in a burned car, and the victims had been shot. At the time of his death, Norbert Zongo was researching a story about the torture and murder of Francois Ouedraogo, the driver for Compaore's younger brother, also named Francois. Zongo had received death threats and had warned his readers that he might be killed.[115] The government's claim that Zongo's death was an accident sparked protests in which tens of thousands of Burkinabe took to the streets in Ouagadougou in what were described as "unprecedented" demonstrations demanding an investigation and calling for an end to impunity.[116] The protests showed the potential power of Burkina Faso's urban population.

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[114] Kakuna Kerina, "Overview of Africa," Committee to Protect Journalists, 1998, https://cpj.org/attacks98/1998/Africa/Africa.html.

[115] "Burkina Faso Coalition Campaigns for Justice in Journalist Zongo's Death, 1998–2001," Global Nonviolent Action Database, 1998–2001, http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/burkina-faso-coalition-campaigns-justice-journalist-zongo-s-death-1998-2001.

[116] Ibid.

Although Burkina Faso had a well-documented history of protest before 1998, the protests following Zongo's death were marked by an increasing intensity, duration, and effectiveness not previously seen. There were violent clashes with the army, the police and the RSP. Trade unions, students, and human rights organizations joined forces to form the "Collective of the Democratic Mass Organizations and Political Parties in order to co-ordinate civil society protests against impunity. The Collective still exists today."[117]

In response to these protests, Compaore used his strategy of calculated appeasement in order to prevent further escalation of the public uprisings, project an accommodating image—as Bantenga explained, international eyes were watching and aid dollars were on the line—and stay in power. In 2000, after months of bitter and protracted protests, Compaore reinstated presidential term limits, which appeared to be a significant a concession in the direction of democracy. Other reforms at this time included the introduction of a single ballot voting system, the formation of an independent electoral commission, institution of a system of public campaign financing, and establishing a third vice presidential position for the opposition leader.[118] Additionally, he created a council to review political crimes and make recommendations to "restore social peace."[119]

Why did these particular appeasements work in 2000? Bantenga points to two reasons. First, he focuses our attention on the nature of the opposition, explaining that, although the protests were very powerful, they did not achieve the level of organization needed for political change because the goal of the trade unions and human rights organizations that led them was justice in the face of violence and impunity, not regime change.[120] As described earlier, the leaders of societal opposition at this time were not pro-democratic. The second reason offered by Bantenga reveals an important

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[117] Engels, "Political Transition."

[118] Freedom House, *Burkina Faso, 2012* (Freedom in the World Reports) (New York: Freedom House, 2012), https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/brukina-faso.

[119] "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2001, U.S. State Department," U.S. Department of State, March 4, 2002. https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/af/8271.htm.

[120] Bantenga, interview.

characteristic of Burkinabe society at this time: its traditional structure. He explains that one influence on the trade unions in accepting Compaore's appeasements was that the traditional leader, the Mossi King, intervened on Compaore's behalf.[121] However, Bantenga explains, while the changes made no real difference in the control exerted by Compaore,[122] they were sufficiently convincing to an opposition not focused on democracy but rather on demanding an end to impunity and changes to the government's authoritarian structure.

Though the protests diminished, the lack of justice surrounding Norbert Zongo's murder continued to energize the Burkinabe people.[123] One year after Norbert Zongo's death, Amnesty International reported that an Independent Commission of Inquiry had concluded that Zongo had been murdered for political motives and named six serious suspects, all members of Compaore's Presidential Security Force (RSP).[124] In 2006, the Burkina Faso judiciary dismissed the case, thereby confirming in the minds of many Burkinabe, the impunity of Compaore's RSP. That decision was met with yet another round of angry protests.[125] In 2014, the African Court on Human and People's Rights found that the Burkina Faso court had not diligently investigated the murder of Norbert Zongo, that the government showed no will to hold the killer accountable, and that the killing was a method of intimidation that should not be allowed.[126]

The significance of the killing of Norbert Zongo is hard to overstate. Rinaldo Depagne, director of International Crisis Group's West Africa Programs, has described

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[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid.

[123] "A Victory for Human Rights Defenders in Burkina Faso" Diakonia, April 29, 2017, http://www.diakonia.se/en/Results-Stories-of-change/Stories-of-change/Norbert-Zongo-MBDHP/.

[124] "Burkina Faso: A Year after Norbert Zongo's Death—Still No Justice," AI Index Africa 60/04/99, News Service 233/99, December 10, 1999, https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/140000/afr600041999en.pdf.

[125] "Appeals Court Upholds Judge's Decision to Drop All Charges in Zongo Case," Reporters Without Borders, August 17, 2006, https://rsf.org/en/news/appeal-court-upholds-judges-decision-drop-all-charges-zongo-case.

[126] Ibid.

the killing as the turning point in the Compaore regime.[127] Depagne believes the lasting significance of the protests of Zongo's death is that they "created confidence among citizens about their own rights."[128] Trade unions and other civil society organizations learned that Compaore responded to pressure,[129] and from this point, the pressure on Compaore's regime steadily increased.[130]

E.   CONCLUSION

For Burkina Faso, the period between 1997 and 2005 was one of constitutional and social change but also a period in which Compaore, lacking meaningful opposition in society, continued to maintain his grip on power. Various groups found ways to interact with the leader, primarily via mass protests expressing grievances over wages, working conditions, violence, and impunity; but, ultimately, there was little appetite and questionable capacity to mount any serious challenges to Compaore's pursuit of a third term. As such, in 2005, Compaore faced little threat that he would be defeated at the ballot box. He had a dominant political party, the rural vote, the ability to buy other votes if needed, and a system of patronage that engendered loyalty. Equally important, Compaore's opposition during this time had goals other than political change. The trade unions responded to wage increases. Human rights organizations—and others at times of blatant abuse such as the killing of Norbert Zongo—sought justice. The tool of the opposition, mass protests, provided society some leverage. While at times these protests effectively constrained some aspects of Compaore's behavior, there was little threat to Compaore's ability to extend his mandate.

As Chapter III will show, there existed a fundamentally different ideological movement in 2014 which was empowered to overthrow Compaore. There were two noticeable differences in society between the 1997–2005 episode and the events of 2014.

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[127] Thomas Fessy, "How Burkina Faso's Blaise Compaore Sparked His Own Downfall," *BBC News*, October 31, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-29858965.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Bantenga, interview.

[130] Engels "Political Transition."

First, the urban population was considerably smaller and detached from the main opposition movements of the time. Second, the most active groups in 1997–2005 were trade unions and human rights groups with socialist leanings. They were content with advances in issues such as wages, working conditions, and justice. Other components of civil society at this time were not well-organized and not political. In essence, the intrinsic motivation and goal of civil society opposition at this time was not regime change.

After 2005, increased urban growth coupled with demographic changes in urban society would empower civil society with regard to Compaore and, most importantly, a new component of civil society would emerge with a different—pro-democracy— ideology, mobilizing a new group of urban citizens and would grow to become the dominant power of civil society.

III.   DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIETAL CHANGES

A.   INTRODUCTION

When President Compaore announced that he would run in the election of 2010, facets of civil society speculated that he would attempt to abolish term-limits in order to run again in 2015. The fear that Compaore would once again try to manipulate the constitution to remove term limits created an undercurrent of tension within concerned elements of society, driving the events of the next few years toward the explosive popular uprising on October 31, 2014, in which he would be ousted. By that time, Compaore had lost one of his most important advantages, no longer having a plausible constitutional argument for his right to stand for re-election; and, in spite of his legislative and popular efforts, he never recovered that legitimacy.

This chapter will discuss demographic and societal changes between 2005 and 2014 that empowered society to stop Compaore from yet another extension of his mandate. The factors of urbanization and the functioning of civil society organizations were essential to society's ability to oust Compaore. Following the 2005 election, changes in aspects particularly of urbanization and civil society resulted in an expanding and refocusing of societal opposition to Compaore to such a degree that Compaore's strategies as described in the previous chapter no longer worked. The factor of formal education became less important as pro-democracy civil society groups were attracting new, urban, less well-educated youth.

B.   URBANIZATION, EDUCATION, AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

In the four years from 2005 to 2014, the urban population of Burkina Faso almost doubled, an increase that significantly influenced the makeup and functioning of the civil society opposition to Compaore.[131] A majority of the urban growth was young. Approximately 65% of the population of Burkina Faso is under age twenty-five, and

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[131] World Bank, "Urban Population."

many of these young Burkinabe were part of the internal rural-to-urban youth migration occurring in Burkina Faso.[132] Large shanty-towns developed on the periphery of Ouagadougou, filled with unemployed young people looking for a better life. In contrast to traditional opposition members, these youth had less formal education and were not part of civil society organizations.[133] The rapid expansion of the pro-democracy sector of civil society between 2005 and 2014 is in large part due to the mobilization of this growing urban youth population.

Pro-democracy leader Saidou with the Center for the Democratic Governance of Burkina Faso (CDG) explained the pro-democracy movement in Burkina Faso and its appeal to young people. The pro-democracy movement was unique from its predecessors in several ways: it was more broadly appealing, it was focused on the ideology of constitutionalism and was not interested in concessions, and it was willing to demand that government function according to the constitution.[134] As explained by Dr. Saidou, the appeal of the pro-democracy movement to young people was that it was not perceived to be intellectually demanding or exclusive in the way that communism was, and neither did the democracy movement desire to remain clandestine. As a result, pro-democracy messages appealed to young people outside the traditional university and intellectual circles in a way that communism did not.[135]

C.   PRO-DEMOCRACY BEGINNINGS

Newly formed pro-democracy organizations such as the CDG, a coalition of human rights groups, lawyers, and judges founded in 2008, used a number of truly grassroots techniques to connect with this young migrant population.[136] Many of the outreach tools were simple and low tech: flyers or posters with pictures of Barack Obama or Kofi Annan, radio in local languages, word of mouth, group meetings and events.

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[132] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest;" Saidou, interview.

[133] Saidou, interview.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Ibid.

While there were certainly economic and logistical reasons for this—relatively low Internet penetration, for example—there may have been an important advantage as well. Author Thomas Friedman explained why such "analog"[137] techniques might have been particularly effective, especially between 2005 and 2013 as the movement grew and before the decisive events of 2014. Friedman writes that gaining legitimacy involves making connections, building understanding and consensus, and gaining trust.[138] Time spent early on by civil society pro-democracy groups such as CDG providing civic education and raising awareness of democracy and political activism among these young disenfranchised citizens developed those vital attributes. In Burkina Faso, the work of CDG and other pro-democracy civil society organizations demonstrated that having less formal education did not prevent these young people from understanding concepts that had a fundamental impact on their lives. Mobilization of this youthful, less well-educated group tipped the balance for the opposition in the overthrow of Compaore.

CDG's outreach also attracted more traditional elements of society such as university students. The CDG was formed by a group of lawyers, judges, and human rights organizations to "promote democratic governance through applied research, training, education, and facilitation of democratic dialog."[139] Dr. Saidou explains that CDG reached out to student groups and unions at the University of Ouagadougou, making inroads and raising awareness with students and professors. Many students and professors associated themselves with socialist ideology because they were drawn to its intellectual appeal, and they were primarily those who organized discussions and debated social and political topics. Following, and likely, at least in part, as a result of Compaore's success in 2005, pro-democracy discussion gradually expanded on campus. CGD, in particular, engaged with university students and faculty using analog techniques such as sponsoring face-to-face discussion and debate competitions to contrast

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[137] Thomas Friedman, *Thank You for Being Late: An Optimists Guide to Thriving in the Age of Acceleration* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016), Audibles book, 1:15:43.

[138] Ibid.

[139] "Centre for the Democratic Governance of Burkina Faso: About Us," AfroBarometer, accessed April 29, 2017, http://afrobarometer.org/our-network/national-partners/centre-democratic-governance-burkina-faso.

democracy and socialism and to communicate the importance of consistency in democratic institutions. Over the next few years, discussions and debates regarding democracy and constitutionalism became a mainstay on the university campus.[140]

Additional benefits of these analog techniques between 2008 and 2013 included providing a space for existing civil society writ large to absorb and respond to the pro-democracy movement, for civil society organizations to develop themselves politically, and, significantly, for new pro-democratic civil society organizations to form.[141] These years saw the creation of influential pro-democratic civil society groups, including in 2011, the formidable Balai Citoyen that Yarwood described as pivotal in the defeat of Compaore.[142]

D.   PRO-DEMOCRACY MOMENTUM

Founders of Balai Citoyen (Citizen's Broom), students and journalists, were concerned about how Compaore had come to power, about recent violence involving the killing of student Justin Zongo, about Compaore's enrichment of himself and elites at the expense of the Burkinabe people and also about how long he had been in office. Impunity and inequality were key words in the rallying cries of the organization.[143] In a recent interview, Balai Citoyen's public affairs officer explained that weak political opposition had failed to engage the 500 to 900 thousand jobless youths, especially non-university youths, in the Ouagadougou area.[144] Balai Citoyen was non-partisan, pro-democratic and non-violent. Its aim was popular mobilization to "sweep out" poor government and protect the constitution.[145] Balai Citoyen was a force multiplier in that it brought together existing, smaller groups. The message of Balai Citoyen was constitutional, but also

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[140] Saidou, interview.

[141] Friedman, *Thank You for Being Late*.

[142] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest."

[143] Public affairs representative, interview with author, March 6, 2017.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Ernest Harsch, "Citizen's Revolt in Burkina Faso," Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa, December 9, 2014, http://forums.ssrc.org/african-futures/2014/12/09/citizens-revolt-in-burkina-faso.

highlighted the economic and security consequences of a leader who had stayed in power too long. Balai Citoyen believed that the only way these needs would be addressed was through a change of power.

Like CDG, Balai Citoyen focused on outreach and worked in bus stops and markets to reach everyday citizens, especially young, everyday citizens.[146] Balai Citoyen also went out into smaller towns and rural areas, but its beginnings and most of its work were urban.[147] In an interview, the organization's Public Affairs Officer provided a contrast between the 1998 protests of the killing of Norbert Zongo at which time the traditional Mossi King had intervened on behalf of Compaore and another pivotal event in Burkina Faso, the 2011 protests of the killing of student Justin Zongo, saying that by 2011 youths were protesting against traditional structures.[148]

The groundwork accomplished by CDG and Balai Citoyen between 2008 and 2013 was essential to the pro-democracy movements' readiness for the rapid onset of events that would occur in 2014. When civil society broadened its participation base and used appeals to urban citizens lacking formal education, the pro-democracy movement was able to grow by reaching those who had been on the margins until now. The idea of democracy took root, slowly at first with an incubation period of sorts during which relationships could be solidified and ideas could be developed, discussed, and debated. The formation of Balai Citoyen increased momentum, but the movement would not reach full force until the events of 2013 provided clear direction for the cause. This time had arrived for the new societal opposition to coalesce and so commit to substantially new democratic ideas that pro-democracy groups replaced the trade unions as drivers of the opposition, and the goal was no longer concessions but rather protection of the constitution.

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[146] Public affairs representative, interview.

[147] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest."

[148] Public affairs representative, interview.

E.   URBANIZATION AND PRO-DEMOCRACY CRITICAL MASS

Just as it was new, young, urban migrants who provided the nucleus for the pro-democracy movement, urbanization was also vital to that movement's surge and success. Two particularly urban advantages are greater availability of the Internet and the presence of venues. Although cell phones and social media were not so impactful during the earliest years while some degree of consensus around democratic ideas was being established, they eventually played an important role in energizing and mobilizing civil society opponents to Compaore.

Their impact began to be felt when, in 2011, largely via sharing on social media, the Burkina Faso pro-democracy movement was encouraged by the success of its neighbor, Senegal, when in conditions similar to those in Burkina Faso, a group known as Y'en a Marre emerged, formed by journalists and popular Senegalese rap musicians. "*Y'en a Marre*" means "We're Fed Up"[149] and, as Yarwood explains, they were "fed up with poverty, corruption, and growing inequality."[150] With music and media campaigns, Y'en a Marre reached out to Senegalese citizens, explaining why the constitution should be protected and developing campaigns such as, "*Ne touch pas a ma constitution*," (Don't touch my constitution), and "My vote is my weapon." Senegalese leader Abdoulaye Wade, seeking a third term after a constitutional change allowing him to run, was voted out.[151] From 2011 onward, social media was firmly in the corner of the pro-democracy opposition.

Although lack of Internet access even in urban areas is still a concern in Burkina Faso, by 2011, the number of cell phones in use had increased from one million in 2005 to ten million.[152] LeBas has written that cell phones were a "deeply transformative"[153]

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[149] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest."

[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid.

[152] "Burkina Faso: Communications," CIA World Factbook, May 15, 2008, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uv.html; Burkina Faso: Communications," CIA World Factbook, January 28, 2014, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uv.html.

[153] LeBas, "Term Limits and Beyond."

technology in the 2014 protests. On Twitter, #lwili, a reference to traditional clothing often worn by protesters, trended during the uprisings. Compaore, ironically, appealed for calm using his own Twitter account.[154]

Another particularly urban advantage is that cities attract diverse groups of people and offer venues where ideas can be exchanged. Ouagadougou is an international city and one such venue was the Pan African Film Festival, International Cine Droit Libre Film Festival (FESPACO), which draws a large, international crowd. The rapper co-founders of Senegal's Y'en a Marre attended the festival in 2013 where they met Burkinabe musicians and activists Smockey, a rapper, and Sams'K Le Jay, a reggae artist. In an example of what Lewis and Ross call "youth movements linked up across francophone Africa,"[155] Y'en a Marre formed an alliance with Smockey and Sams'K Le Jah, helping them to propel Le Balai Citoyen and the pro-democracy movement into a game-changing vehicle.[156] Yarwood writes that Balai Citoyen was likely the critical component leading to success in ousting Compaore.[157] With the involvement of Smockey and Sams'K Le Jay, the pro-democracy movement burgeoned as throngs of young urban Burkinabe identified with and became part of the pro-democratic opposition.

F.   THE ISSUE OF TERM LIMITS

The constitutional term-limit issue came to the forefront in 2013[158] when Compaore openly began to make his first moves toward amending Article 37 of the constitution to extend term limits. By this time, Balai Citoyen and the pro-democracy civil society movement were ready for mass mobilization using social media, big events such as concerts and, of course, massive protests to constrain Compaore from achieving a second mandate extension.

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[154] Ibid.

[155] David Lewis and Aaron Ross, "Connected and Angry, African Youth Groups Push for Democracy," Reuters, May 1, 2015, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-democracy-insight-idUSKBN0NM3UT20150501.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest."

[158] Saidou, interview.

As the pro-democracy movement had grown stronger, Compaore, for a number of reasons not related to term limits, had started to lose his tight control of his party and, as a result, the National Assembly. No longer enjoying the 75 percent majority in Parliament necessary to amend the constitution and wanting to avoid what might be a risky referendum, Compaore's first move was an attempt to establish a Senate, hoping his ability to appoint many members of this Senate individually would allow him to secure the three-quarters support he needed to amend the Constitution.

Society's move in response to this transparent attempt was to hold massive anti-Senate protests over the following months, which successfully blocked its establishment.[159] Society's response was bold once again when in January of 2014, after his failure to establish a Senate, Compaore circulated the idea of holding a constitutional referendum to amend Article 37. Compaore's attempts to manipulate the constitution only seemed to energize the pro-democracy groups against his mandate extension.

Over the next few months more activist organizations formed, including the influential Collective Anti-Referendum (CAR) initially formed by 365 associations in Ouagadougou and then expanding across the country. Some opposition political parties formed their own anti-referendum committees. Later in the year, another activist group, Front de Resistance Citoyenne (FRC) emerged composed of 24 civil society organizations and headed by members of the traditional resistance—"high profile pro-democracy intellectuals."[160] Inspirational symbols of Sankara began to emerge in 2014 as signs with his picture, videos, and his voice playing on loudspeakers rallied protesters, many of whom were not yet born at the time of Compaore's coup against him.[161] By this time, political opposition and traditional opposition had been revitalized, but the power of civil society was in the grassroots pro-democracy movement.

When it was apparent that Compaore would seek a fifth term, by summer of 2014 Balai Citoyen and the pro-democracy opposition had been building the momentum

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[159] Hersch, "Citizens Revolt in Burkina Faso."

[160] Ibid.

[161] Ibid.

needed to turn out the people. In another assist from Senegal, Y'en a Marre performed concerts and took part in conferences and protests in Ouagadougou and Bobo Dioulasso. The Burkina Faso version of "*Ne touch pas ma constitution*" was "Hands off my constitution." Efforts to inform the people about why a constitution mattered and to rally support accelerated.[162]

G.   A TIPPING POINT

Led by Balai Citoyen and the pro-democracy movement, hundreds of thousands crowded into the central square in Ouagadougou during the last week of October 2014. They called for Compaore to honor the constitution by not calling for a referendum to extend his mandate, characterizing his plan to run for a fifth term as a "constitutional coup."[163] They were met with tear gas as they marched. Similar protests occurred in Bobo-Dioulasso and in the smaller towns of Koudougou, Ouahigouya, Kaya, Koupela, Dori, and others across the country. In line with instructions from Balai Citoyen and other groups, these protests were for the most part still peaceful.

One foreign diplomat, in a 2017 interview, offered an insight into both Compaore and the protesters, stating that Compaore did not realize how mad people were. Burkina Faso's streets were overflowing with citizens demanding that he cancel the vote for a referendum to extend term limits. However, he was not dissuaded. Dorrie writes, "Compaore's rule was challenged on multiple occasions over the years."[164] He had seen mass anger before in the Norbert and Justin Zongo cases and had with force and concessions survived it. This time, however, civil society opposition had changed in fundamental ways with a grassroots pro-democracy movement now becoming the dominant civil society power. Compaore, on the other hand, had not developed new

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[162] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest."

[163] Harsch, "Citizens' Revolt in Burkina Faso,"

[164] Peter Doerrie, "Stalled Transition: Burkina Faso's Fading Chance for Reform," World Politics Review, October 20, 2015, http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/16993/stalled-transistion-burkina-faso-s-fading-chance-for-reform.

strategies and the old ones were less effective because the pro-democracy sector was not interested in concessions.

The vote was set for October 30.[165] For society, the tipping point occurred when the country learned that, in a surprise move, Compaore had convinced enough members of parliament to support the repeal of term limits and the National Assembly could pass the repeal without requiring a subsequent referendum. Le Balai Citoyen, CGD, and other civil society groups called for mass protests and, by some counts, as many as a million people filled the streets.[166] One international observer who wished to remain anonymous explained in a 2017 interview, "The Burkina people are patient, but now didn't believe Compaore would ever leave."[167] Angry and confrontational, their call now was for Compaore to resign.[168] "*Blaise dégagê*" (Blaise clear out) and "*BF = Burkina Faso, pa Blaise et Francois*" (not Blaise and Francois [his brother]) was shouted and painted on walls. Thousands packed the National Assembly and prevented the vote. The government's television network was forced off the air.[169]

It was the youth-led Balai Citoyen and CAR that were on the frontline, deciding to breach security and torch the National Assembly, and march to the presidential palace.[170] They also torched the homes of members of parliament from both the Compaore regime side and opposition party sides—an illustration of their broad

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[165] Fessy, "How Burkina Faso's Blaise Compaore."

[166] Sten Hagberg, "Popular Uprising Led to Political Turnover in Burkina Faso—Struggles over Legitimacy and Legality," Mats Utas, November 4, 2014, https://matsutas.wordpress.com/2014/11/04/popular-uprising-led-to-political-turnover-in-burkina-faso-struggles-over-legitimacy-and-legality-by-sten-hagberg/.

[167] Anonymous international observer, interview with author March 2, 2017.

[168] Ibid.

[169] Harsch Ernest, "Citizens' Revolt in Burkina Faso,"

[170] Ibid.

dissatisfaction with government.[171] Compaore tried his appeasement strategy—saying that he would cancel the vote—but it was too late.[172]

Civil society played a role in curtailing violence. Cohen writes that, in the heat of rioting, "Civil society mobilized to head off confrontation."[173] Cohen also writes that the Burkina Faso Youth League was particularly helpful in working with the military to curtail the use of violence against protesters.[174] The Army, already having mutinied in 2011 and seeing the numbers and determination of the protesters, in some cases joined with them and in other cases simply let protesters pass.[175] Only the RSP used violence to protect the palace.[176] The next day, the Compaore government was dissolved. Compaore resigned and fled the country.

H.   IT REALLY WAS ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION

Compaore was overthrown by the pro-democracy movement to protect term limits and the constitution in Burkina Faso. What happened next illustrates their strength and commitment. Following a power struggle among various factions of the Army, Army Chief of Staff Isaac Zida was charged with setting up a transition government and preparing for elections within a year.[177] Ironically, Zida began by suspending the Constitution only to walk back that decision in the face of an overwhelming backlash from Balai Citoyen and the pro-democratic civil society opposition as well as the international community.[178] Civil society continued to be involved in the civilian-led transition committee formed to establish a government and organize elections. Cohen

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[171] Yuhniwo Ngenge, "Don't Touch My Constitution! Burkina Faso's Lesson," Open Democracy, November 4, 2014, https://www.opendemocracy.net/yuhniwo-ngenge/don%E2%80%99t-touch-my-constitution-burkina-faso%27s-lesson.

[172] Harsch, Ernest, "Citizen's Revolt in Burkina Faso,"

[173] Cohen, "Civil Conflict, Civil Society."

[174] Ibid.

[175] Ibid.

[176] Dorrie, "Stalled Transition."

[177] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest."

[178] Dorrie, "Stalled Transition."

writes that the Burkina Bar Association facilitated arrangements among opposition political parties, the Army and the tribal elders for a transitional citizens' government to run the country during a cooling-off period and prepare for elections.[179]

Before the scheduled elections could take place, pro-democracy groups mobilized to fill the streets yet again when, in September 2015, the infamous RSP took the president, prime-minister, and other ministers of the transition government hostage and declared a coup d'état on the national television station. The RSP dissolved the government and parliament and removed the interim president. Civil society mobilized in anger and Burkina Faso was paralyzed by a general strike. After a devastating week for the country, the Army sided with the people and the coup failed. In November 2015, elections took place. Roch Kabore, previously a president of the National Assembly who had defected from Compaore's party in January 2014, was elected.[180] One foreign observer reported that people in authority realize there is a much greater level of public accountability now.[181]

I.   CONCLUSION

Civil society opposition to Compaore as it would take shape between 2005 and 2014 was substantially different from what it had been when Compaore first ran for a third term. The balance of power within the social opposition shifted from the trade unions to the pro-democracy movement and the focus became protecting the constitution including respect for term limits. Civil society was strong enough and focused enough in 2014 to prevent Compaore from extending his mandate.

Between 2005 and 2014, civil society opposition to Compaore remained overwhelmingly urban. The makeup of that opposition changed, however, as a growing civil society pro-democracy movement emerged in the city of Ouagadougou and reached out to thousands of young internal rural to urban migrants who had recently come to the

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[179] Ibid.

[180] Hagberg, "Popular Uprising."

[181] Anonymous foreign observer (U.S. Embassy Burkina Faso), interview with author, March 2, 2017.

city of Ouagadougou. Civil society pro-democracy groups such as CGD and Balai Citoyen offered what Yarwood has called "a channel for alienated youth to voice their frustrations and mobilize politically."[182]

The emergence of effective new civil society groups like CDG and Balai Citoyen mattered immensely to the success of the opposition. Their strategy of providing civic education about democracy, constitutions, and provisions such as term limits, tailored for the less well-educated newly urban youth to help them to connect the dots between long tenures in office and abuses such as corruption and impunity was essential to mobilizing them in 2014. The groups' use of analog techniques such as discussion and debate, coupled with the time between 2008 and 2013 before they really had to mobilize in mass, enabled the pro-democracy movement to start somewhat slowly and build consensus as it gained momentum and grew stronger. It appears to have been durable, because after Compaore was gone, pro-democracy groups continued to mobilize to protect the constitution.

With regard to other possible sources of influence mentioned in the literature review, international and geographical, including the presence of natural resources, neither seems likely to have been sufficient to constrain Compaore to respect term limits. Compaore often created the appearance of democracy for international observers while covertly utilizing tools of repression and patronage.[183] Also well-known was his self-enrichment and enrichment of the elites by taking profits from international aid as well as from the countries natural resources such as gold and cotton.[184] Given those conditions, it appears that the amount of fungible money from international aid and natural resources would have strengthened Compaore relative to society. In Burkina Faso, civil society was the best and, arguably, the only real option for holding Compaore accountable and protecting term limits.

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[182] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest."

[183] Dirrie, "Burkina Faso: Blaise Compaore."

[184] Dirrie, "Burkina Faso: Blaise Compaore;" Bantenga, interview.

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IV. LESSONS FROM BURKINA FASO'S OVERTHROW OF COMPAORE

A. INTRODUCTION

The puzzle as to why some African leaders find success in changing their country's constitution to evade term limits and others do not has been the subject of academic research, news media attention and concern among both the United States and Western governments and the African Union. This study aimed to contribute to the solution of that puzzle by identifying societal factors which, in Burkina Faso, constrained a president from extending his mandate.

This concluding chapter will discuss findings regarding changes in society from the time of Compaore's successful mandate extension in 2005 to his overthrow in 2014, when mass protests blocked his second attempt at mandate extension. The chapter will analyze what implications these findings may have for other African countries whose leaders may wish to extend their mandates. Additionally, the chapter will suggest possible topics for further investigation and possible implications for the United States government as it pursues successful partnerships with African states as well as for others interested in promoting democracy.

B. WHAT CHANGED BETWEEN 2005 AND 2014?

When Compaore ran for a third term in 2005, society was unable to constrain him in that attempt because the power of civil society at that time rested with the trade unions, which were inclined toward socialist ideologies. Trade union members were urban and formally educated but disconnected from other urban populations that ultimately proved instrumental in driving Compaore from power. Additionally, the analysis in Chapter II indicates that the human rights and trade union groups were not necessarily interested in constitutional issues and regime change. They were content with concessions from the regime and their main outstanding preoccupation was with justice surrounding the Norbert Zongo killing.

What changed by 2014 was the composition and focus of civil society opposition to Compaore. Thousands of young, urban migrants formed the core of a new civil society movement, ideologically different from what had existed previously because it was pro-democracy and demographically different because the migrants were newly urban and not formally educated. The groups were consciously pro-democratic, spreading messages that sought to educate citizens about constitutional issues, and specifically the need to maintain term limits under Article 37. By 2014, pro-democracy groups had become the dominant power of civil society and successfully mobilized to overthrow Compaore, constraining him from extending his mandate for a second time.

C.   HYPOTHESES EVALUATED

This thesis examined the hypothesis that societal factors can be a key force in constraining leaders in their efforts to extend their mandates. In particular, I hypothesized that urbanization, civil society development, and education levels could propel an opposition in a way that limits a leader's ability to successfully extend his mandate. My investigation of Burkina Faso has revealed that, in 2014, there were additional effective constraints on President Compaore's power, that these constraints came from societal factors, and that the specific factors of urbanization and the functioning of civil society organizations were particularly influential. The study does not confirm the influence of level of formal education. In Burkina Faso, formal education was found to be less influential as a determining factor in society's ability to constrain Compaore's extension of his mandate.

Urbanization was important because it enabled the synergy between demographic changes and the new pro-democracy civil society organizations, which empowered Burkinabe society to overthrow Compaore in 2014. While societal opposition to Compaore in both 2005 and 2014 was almost entirely urban, by 2014, urban demographics had shifted to include the rural to urban migrants. Concurrently, the urban pro-democracy movement shifted the ideological focus of societal opposition from obtaining concessions and justice to protecting the constitution and, specifically in 2014, to protecting term limits.

Two particular demographic characteristics of the new urban migrants mattered in relation to the hypothesis of this thesis. First, the migrants were young and, as noted by Yarwood in the literature review, the demographic of youth is associated with both urban dwellers and with support for term limits.[185] Second, these young migrants had less formal education than members of the opposition prior to 2005. Although the connection between higher levels of formal education and support for term limits has been documented, again by Yarwood as discussed in the literature review, findings of this study indicate that higher levels formal education were not necessarily important to the successful mobilization of the migrant population for the protection of term limits.[186] In short, the case of Burkina Faso suggests that the role of formal education in supporting term limits and transfers of power appears to be overstated in the literature.

Since urbanization, although very important, is structural and formal education was not found to be influential, I argue that the factor studied that contributed most to society's ousting of Compaore was the functioning of civil society organizations. Specifically, I argue that it was the effective work of new pro-democracy civil society organizations, which mobilized newly urban migrants to support adherence to term limits, which empowered society to oust Compaore.

Unlike material concerns or efforts to secure justice for Norbert Zongo, pro-democracy groups were able to unify diverse interests for a single purpose. They were successful in doing this for four reasons. First, they represented a new ideology in civil society in Burkina Faso. Second, they attracted new citizens who had not previously been politically active. Third, they used methodologies such as outreach and civic education which helped to build legitimacy for the movement and to create a pro-democracy consensus. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, they provided an opportunity for political mobilization.

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[185] Yarwood, "The Power of Protest."

[186] Ibid.

D.   POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

From this study, five topics emerge that may be worthy of further investigation. First, with regard to urbanization, it may be worthwhile to investigate the extent to which visible signs of ruling class exigencies helped to mobilize protesters by comparing the impact of a capital city such as Ouagadougou with the impact of a large, urban West African non-capital city on the success of civil society pro-democracy opposition to a leader. Contrasts between the living conditions of government officials and the living conditions of ordinary citizens are visible in a capital city, the presidential palace for example contrasted with shanty towns on the outskirts of Ouagadougou. To citizens, such contrasts may be an indication of government accountability or lack thereof. A study comparing the impact of visible inequality between government officials and ordinary citizens in a capital city with a city in which the living conditions of government officials are not visible would tell us what, if any, impact making such inequality visible has on civil society, the pro-democracy movement within society, and the success or failure of society in constraining a leader to honor his mandate.

A second topic for future research may be found in the interaction between civil society opposition and opposition politicians. In Burkina Faso, as the civil society pro-democratic movement grew stronger, weak opposition political parties also began to grow marginally stronger and Compaore's dominant party began to fracture. This appears conceptually logical. It might be helpful, however, to discover if this pattern is replicated in other countries and, if so, investigate the interaction among these three factors—strengthening of civil society opposition, strengthening of previously weak political opposition, and weakening of the dominant political party. Such a study might have implications for civil society to participate in a non-partisan way to help political opposition parties put forth candidates or develop platforms where they have not had them in the past. This type of cooperation could perhaps mean avoiding the overthrow of a leader by making it possible to defeat him through constitutional means.

A third area has to do with the role of social media. When does sharing on social media become beneficial to a movement? For observers looking only at 2013 and 2014 when the term limits issue in Burkina Faso began to attract widespread attention, it may

have appeared that rap, reggae and sharing on social media built the pro-democracy movement. In fact, the pro-democracy movement had done significant pro-democracy consensus building before it needed to mobilize in the latter half of 2014. While sharing on social media contributed much to the success in ousting Compaore in 2014, evidence shows, in Egypt for example, that it was not helpful following the ousting of Mubarak. As Wael Ghonim explained, "when the euphoria faded…we failed to build consensus and social media became a battlefield of misinformation, rumors, and trolls…[which] eventually tore us apart."[187] It appears that social media may galvanize a movement and help to oust a particular leader, but the desired long-term result, a more accountable, fairly elected government, for example, may not happen or may not last. Knowledge of when a movement is sufficiently mature to benefit from social media sharing of its ideas and events could perhaps be helpful to fledging pro-democratic organizations.

The fourth topic is to better understand pro-democratic organizations that were pivotal in Burkina Faso, such as CDG and Balai Citoyen. As new organizations, they had to develop a structure, fund their activities, and build consensus within the organizations at the same time they were educating and building pro-democracy consensus among citizens. Lessons that might be learned from these two organizations include how to form and grow the organization itself as well as how to develop and use the most effective methodologies for accomplishing their missions. Such lessons could be valuable to other civil society pro-democracy groups in earlier stages of development.

Finally, it might be useful to investigate what happens to democracy after the revolution. The ousting of Compaore succeeded in protecting term limits with regard to his administration but not beyond. The first move of the Army transition government put into place on the night Compaore fled was to suspend the constitution. Perhaps a truer test of society's ability to protect term limits would be the need, when a leader is overthrown rather than defeated by constitutional means, for civil society pro-democracy

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[187] Maeve Shearlaw, "Egypt Five Years On: Was It Ever a "Social Media Revolution?" *The Guardian*, January 25, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/25/egypt-5-years-on-was-it-ever-a-social-media-revolution.

groups to continue to function to ensure that the constitution and term limits are protected in the transition from one leader to the next.

E. POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND OTHER DEMOCRACY PROMOTERS

The United States government has identified two priorities to which findings of this study are relevant: promoting good governance and democracy, including respect for term limits, and reducing the threat of violent extremist organizations.[188] Both undemocratic, unaccountable governments and violent extremist organizations create conditions of instability that threaten the strategic interests of the United States.

In Burkina Faso, a civil society pro-democratic movement addressed both of these concerns by constraining a long-term leader's ability to manipulate the constitution to extend his mandate and by providing civic education and mobilizing a large, young disenfranchised population of rural to urban migrants to become advocates for democracy rather than recruits of a violent extremist group.

Furthermore, results support a focus on developing local solutions.[189] Consistent with maximizing these relationships and developing local solutions, the United States and other promoters of democracy may find it beneficial to seek unobtrusive ways of identifying effective grassroots pro-democratic organizations and, without co-opting, assist them in their work. Such action conforms to strategic objective number 4 of the Department of State and USAID Joint Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism, May 2016, which reads, "Empower and amplify locally credible voices that can change the perception of violent extremist groups and their ideology among key demographic segments."[190]

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[188] LeBas, "Term Limits and Beyond;" U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development, *Joint Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development, 2016), https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/FINAL%20--%20State%20and%20USAID%20Joint%20Strategy%20on%20Countering%20Violent%20Extremism%20%28May%202016%29.pdf.

[189] Africa Command, "AFRICOM 2017 Posture Statement."

[190] U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development, *Joint Strategy*.

Specifically, results of this study indicate that U.S. government resources and those of other pro-democratic groups deployed to assist with specific education about democracy and pro-democracy consensus building have the likelihood of being sound investments. While raising the level of formal education within a society happens over a relatively long period, the faster impact of civic education was demonstrated in Burkina Faso as, between 2008 and 2014, thousands of citizens who had not previously known about democracy or been interested in politics became pro-democracy advocates. Pro-democratic consensus building was important to developing resilience and the capacity to bring about lasting change. Moreover, low-tech tools such as civic education, one-to-one or small group conversations, building understanding and trust, were shown to be important to pro-democratic consensus building. This study supports the U.S. government's encouragement and demonstration of the uses of such tools.

F. CONCLUSION

The experience of Burkina Faso demonstrated that when President Compaore manipulated political institutions, the civil society pro-democracy movement, empowered by increases in the urban population, could hold him accountable and constrain his ability to succeed by using the tool they had—mass protests. Not only could civil society constrain Compaore, it was required to do so; demands for accountability cannot come from weak, fractured, and unrepresentative opposition political parties. While a popular movement was not a substitute for constitutional constraints or electoral competition, it did fill that void by holding Compaore accountable and protecting constitutional term limits, if only against him individually.

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